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Panther Sports News

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY - Charleston, IL 61920
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Feb. 9)

CHARLESTON, IL.--Eastern Illinois University's Gateway Conference Championship football Panthers were equally successful in the classroom during Fall Semester.

Nineteen players, which includes over 25% of the team, compiled at least a 3.0 (B average) or better with two players, MIKE ALTEKRUSE (CARBONDALE) and ERIC ARNOLD (PEKIN), getting perfect 4.0s.

Eight starters had 3.0s or better. They are STEVE BONNES (WAUKEGAN-WEST), JEFF MILLS (WINNETKA-NEW TRIER), JIM MITEFF (LIBERTYVILLE), MARK PETERSEN (MOMENCE), SCOTT PILKERTON (LAMESA, CA-GROSSMONT CC), DAN POLEWSKI (DOLTON-THORNBRIDGE/THORNTON CC), GREG RHEA (CERRITOS, CA-CERRITOS CC) AND RICK ZIEMANN (SAN DIEGO, CA-MESA CC).

Others with a 'B' average are MIKE BOLLAN (VILLA PARK-WILLOWBROOK), RAY BROWN (DETROIT-KING), DAVE LEWANDOWSKI (ELMWOOD PARK-FENWICK), MIKE MACEK (OAK LAWN-COMMUNITY), TOM NEWTON (LEROY), JOHN O'SULLIVAN (ARLINGTON HEIGHTS), ERIC PEDERSON (ARLINGTON HEIGHTS), DAVE POPP (LIBERTYVILLE) AND JOHN VALENTA (NILES-MAINE EAST).

"We're certainly pleased that these students have achieved academic success as well as athletic success. It's the mark of a quality program, and something we're proud to talk about . . . particularly when college athletics is under so much scrutiny these days," said HEAD COACH BOB SPOO, who replaced AL MOLDE in early January.

The Panthers, who reached the NCAA I-AA quarterfinals last fall, were 11-2 overall, won the Gateway Conference with a 5-0 mark and ranked No. 3 in the country in the final poll.